Tips for Finding Credible Sources

1. Look for sources that have .gov or .edu in the web address. This will ensure your source comes from a University or a government-regulated site and the information is considered reliable.
2. Determine if your source is PRIMARY or SECONDARY
   1. PRIMARY sources
      1. Original document (i.e. the text of the speeches)
      2. Creative works (novels, poetry, etc)
      3. Relics/artifacts (pottery, tools from that time, etc)
   2. SECONDARY sources- interprets and analyzes primary sources- sources where someone is discussing primary resources
      1. articles
      2. textbooks
      3. encyclopedias, etc
3. Ask the following questions of your sources:
   1. Who is the author?
      1. If the author can’t be determined, chances are you don’t want his/her information UNLESS it is a reputable institution (see tip 1)
      2. Is your author qualified to be giving reliable information about your topic?
      3. Is this person making money off of this information?
   2. How recent is the source?
      1. If your topic is old, it is ok to use “older” sources of information, but just keep this in mind.
   3. What is the author’s purpose?
      1. Does the author seem biased?
   4. What types of sources are cited at THIS person’s sources?
      1. If your source is using credible sources, chances are their information is good. If your sources is using unreliable sources, chances are their information is unreliable.

Weida, Stacy and Karl Stroda. “Using Research and Evidence.” Purdue Online Writing Lab. 26 Sept. 2012. Web. 23 Oct. 2012. <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/08/>.